

**Alaska State Library
Historical Collections**

Guide to Collection

Field, Minnie, Collector

Minnie Field Collection, ca. 1920s-1940s

Minfield Home in Juneau, Alaska

PCA 355

1.4 linear ft. (1 box)

Processed: 7/98
By: India Spartz

ACQUISITION: Margaret Pearce Fleek of Fairfield, California, donated the collection in 1990. Margaret's mother, Mrs. Frank Pearce, was a lifelong friend of Minnie Field. Acc. No. 1990-061. The State Archives holds Minfield School records.

ACCESS: The photos may be viewed. However the images may not be photocopied. The collection is stored in the extra oversized section.

COPYRIGHT: Request for permission to publish or reproduce material from the collection should be discussed with the Librarian.

PROCESSING: The photos are numbered. A partial inventory is available.

Biographical Note

Minnie Field was born in Ireland. Little is known about her early years but she came to Juneau via British Columbia around 1920 and was the matron and cook at the Federal Jail. While working at the jail, she noticed that many of the inmates' children were neglected. She took some of them home to her room at a boarding house, giving up her bed and sleeping on the floor. After losing the room, she withdrew her savings, \$300.00, and set out to build her own home for the children. She found land in the Tongass National Forest at Mile 17 of the Glacier Highway and raised money by selling her baked goods in the community.

She took in Alaska Native and white children, abused, abandoned, orphaned, at times caring for over 50 at a time. Over 2,000 children in all were raised and educated at the home and school, which received an honor medal in 1938, 1939 from the National Education Association. At times she auctioned her own possessions to keep the home running and selling baked goods to feed the children. In the late 1940's, the Alaska Territorial Dept. of Welfare began financial assistance to the home, \$40-50 per child depending on age. The Minfield Home and School closed in 1950; Minnie Field died in Seattle on March 19, 1951. [From "The House on the Glacier Highway," by Neuberger, R.L., in *Ford Times*, vol. 41, no. 10, Oct. 1949, pp. 1-8.]

Scope and Contents

This collection contains photographs, articles and a few papers collected by Minnie. Many of the photographs were probably taken by Minnie probably photographed the images.. The home and the children are represented, as well as people who may be friends, or young adults who grew up at the home. Images of Minnie show her as a young girl and an elderly woman. The scrapbook is entirely devoted to author Celia Caroline Cole, who wrote inspirational articles for *The Delineator*, a fashion magazine published by the Butterick Co. in the 1900's.

Inventory

Photograph album

- 1-207 [snapshots of individuals, including children, adults, groups, the Home, pets, gardens. No captions or identification.]
- 208 [Lover's lane, Sitka. n.d.]
- 209 [portrait of woman, elegant attire, hat.]

- 210 Minnie Fields [Field], her album [Minnie Field dressed in fur parka, pants, boots]
- 211 Princess Charlotte about 1925. Gilkey's gold dredging outfit in front of 105 St. Ann's Ave., Douglas/Treadwell. Roof of 300 stamp mill right corner. Bldg. burned Oct. 10th, 1926.
- 212 Minnie Field with children at the Minfield Home in Juneau [ca. 1940's?] [2 copies]
- 213 [Certificate from National Education Association, 1938,1939]
- 214 [Thank-you note from Laura Harlan, Secretary to Mrs. (Warren) Harding, Sept. 4, 1923.]
- 215 *Ford Times*, October, 1949.
- 216 P.C. Dock, Juneau, Al [Pacific Steamship Co. dock, Juneau, Alaska]. Elite Studio. [framed photograph]
- 217 [Governor's mansion, Juneau, ca. 1920] [framed postcard]
- 218-223 Minfield School, children.
- 224 Linda, Mary Ann, Minfield Home.
- 225 Girls at Minfield Home.
- 226 Minnie Field's Doggy.
- 227 Doggy's at Minfield Home. Juneau.
- 228 Part of Minfield Garden. Juneau.
- 229 Linda & Allen. Minfield Home.
- 230 The cook caught in the act. [decopaged photograph, Minnie Field (?) in flower garden]
- 231 [Letter/donation to Minnie Field from E. Lawrie Mifflin. Dec. 12, 1949]
- 232 [Certificate of membership to Minnie Fields [Field] from the National Geographic Society. May 14, 1923.]

Scrapbook

22 articles by Celia Caroline Cole and 10x13 in. photograph of Minnie Field
[same as #210.]